

Message Text

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72

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-11 USPS-02 OC-06 CCO-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 /116 W

----- 041208

R 052155Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1776

UNCLAS LIMA 7430

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OGEN, MILI, US, PE

SUBJECT: APO SERVICE FOR PERU

1. EMBASSY AND MAAG ARE SUBMITTING A REQUEST TO THE DEPARTMENT AND TO DOD FOR THE RELOCATION OF APO NY 09865 FROM HOWARD AFB, CANAL ZONE, TO LIMA AND FOR ITS EXPANSION TO INCLUDE ALL AGENCIES OF THE U.S. MISSION IN PERU. THIS APO NOW SERVES ONLY U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL IN LIMA. IN AN EXCHANGE OF DIPLOMATIC NOTES WITH THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, THE EMBASSY HAS OBTAINED THE APPROVAL OF THE GOP FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF THIS SERVICE IN PERU.

2. IT IS THE EMBASSY'S UNDERSTANDING THAT THERE MAY BE SOME RELUCTANCE ON THE PART OF DOD TO CONCUR IN THE EXPANSION OF THE APO TO INCLUDE CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES OF THE MISSION. SUCH RELUCTANCE REPORTEDLY STEMS FROM POSSIBLE REIMBURSEMENT PROBLEMS BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENTS OF STATE AND DEFENSE FOR SERVICES OF THIS TYPE. IF THIS IS INDEED TRUE, THE EMBASSY WOULD LIKE TO EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE AND URGENCY IT ATTACHES TO THIS REQUEST AND TO ENLIST THE FULL SUPPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT IN PURSUING ITS SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION WITH DOD.

3. THE LACK OF AN APO IN THE PAST FOR THE CIVILIAN ELEMENTS OF THE MISSION HAS BEEN THE SINGLE MOST IRRITATING AND PERSISTENT MORALE PROBLEM AT THIS POST FOR SOME YEARS AND ONE

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WHICH THE EMBASSY HAS BEEN TRYING TO SOLVE FOR MANY MONTHS.

THE MAJOR HURDLE HAS BEEN THE FORMAL EXPLICIT CONCURRENCE OF THE GOP. THIS IS NOW IN HAND AND THE EMBASSY HOPES TO START OPERATING THE APO IN TIME FOR THE CHRISTMAS RUSH.

4. AS THE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, MANY IF NOT MOST OTHER MAJOR LATIN AMERICAN POSTS HAVE ACCESS TO APO SERVICES AND THEREBY ENJOY THE ATTENDANT ADVANTAGES OF QUICKER, MORE RELIABLE, AND CHEAPER PACKAGE DELIVERIES. THIS POST HAS SUFFERED AN UNUSUALLY HIGH INCIDENCE OF PILFERED DIPLOMATIC SURFACE POUCHES (SEE EMBTELS 1605, 3252 AND 4605 OF FEBRUARY 28, APRIL 24 AND JUNE 11, 1974) AND MISSION PERSONNEL HAVE LOST COLLECTIVELY MORE THAN TWO THOUSAND DOLLARS WORTH OF GOODS THIS PAST CALENDAR YEAR WITHOUT ANY RECOURSE FOR REPLACEMENT OR REIMBURSEMENT FOR LOSS. MOREOVER, DELAYS IN TOTAL TRANSIT TIME OF FOUR, FIVE AND SIX MONTHS ARE EXPERIENCED REGULARLY IN RECEIVING ORDERS PLACED WITH RELIABLE MERCHANTISERS SUCH AS SEARS AND MONTGOMERY WARD. WITHOUT AN APO, THERE ALSO IS NO CONVENIENT AND ECONOMICAL WAY TO RETURN INCORRECT OR DAMAGED ORDERS TO THE UNITED STATES. IN BRIEF, PERSONAL PACKAGE SERVICE FROM THE UNITED STATES TO LIMA IS POOR AT BEST AND, FOR ALL PRACTICAL PURPOSES, NON-EXISTENT IN THE OTHER DIRECTION.

5. AS LONG AS THE MAJOR IMPEDIMENT TO THE INSTALLATION OF APO SERVICE WAS ITS ACCEPTANCE BY THE HOST GOVERNMENT, MISSION PERSONNEL HAVE SUFFERED THE INCONVENIENCE AND LOSSES IN GOOD FOREIGN SERVICE FASHION. IT HAS, NEVERTHELESS, BEEN DIFFICULT TO ACCEPT WHEN IT IS COMMON KNOWLEDGE THAT MOST NEARBY POSTS HAVE ENJOYED TIMELY, ECONOMICAL AND RELIABLE APO SERVICE. IT HAS BEEN A PARTICULARLY ONEROUS BURDEN FOR OUR PEOPLE TO BEAR WHEN AT THE SAME TIME THEY HAVE HAD TO COPE WITH AN OFFICIAL EXCHANGE RATE THAT RESULTS IN A PRACTICAL REDUCTION OF ALMOST 30 PERCENT IN LOCAL BUYING POWER; A RAPIDLY SOARING RATE OF INFLATION THAT IS AVERAGING 22 PERCENT ON AN ANNUAL BASIS THIS YEAR AND SHOWS NO SIGN OF ABATEMENT; AND A GENERAL LACK OF SUITABLE GOODS ON THE LOCAL MARKET. THESE ARE AMONG THE FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO A POTENTIALLY SERIOUS MORALE PROBLEM AT THIS POST.

6. THE FORMAL REQUEST FOR DOD APPROVAL, PREPARED ALONG THE UNCLASSIFIED

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LINES SUGGESTED BY THE USAF POSTAL AND COURIER SERVICE LOCATED IN PANAMA, WILL BE SUBMITTED BY AIR POUCH TOMORROW. IT IS REQUESTED THAT THE DEPARTMENT MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO SUPPORT AND SPEED ITS APPROVAL BY DOD SO THAT AN APO FOR LIMA CAN BE PLACED IN OPERATION BEFORE THE END OF THIS MONTH, AND IN ANY EVENT IN TIME FOR THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY SEASON.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POSTAL SERVICE, MILITARY BASES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 SEP 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974LIMA07430
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740247-0236
From: LIMA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740973/aaaacjpy.tel
Line Count: 114
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: martinjw
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <25 JUN 2002 by maustmc>; APPROVED <28 JAN 2003 by martinjw>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: APO SERVICE FOR PERU
TAGS: OGEN, MILI, US, PE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005